

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 1 6

# Connected to the Vine

## *The Carpenter Family Update*

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” - Jesus

### Discipling for Development Update

We are excited about the D for D group that had been meeting in Cyangugu region because they are branching out and starting new groups in their local churches! We have a good plan for 2016 and feel positive about the ownership and multiplication we are witnessing. We (the Carpenter family) moved to Kigali in January for the main purpose of being strategically located for our work with the national D for D team in the next few months before our furlough begins at the end of May. We will be focused on raising the capacity of some key leaders to help at the national and regional levels, especially in the area of teaching and follow-up.



### Pray with us!

#### ***We praise the Lord . . .***

- for Gideon's safe arrival and for the joy he brings us;
- that our time in Kigali is starting off well;
- and for continued evidence that Rwandan leaders are desiring and owning whole-life discipleship.

#### ***We pray . . .***

- that the Lord will prepare Rwandan leaders, especially Simparinka, for the time we will be gone;
- that the Lord will enable us to be well-prepared for our furlough time;
- and that the Lord will empower us to keep growing in him, especially as we anticipate a season of busyness and travel.

### Last Coaching Trip to Uganda



Chelsea, Sarai, and Gideon joined Brad on a D for D trip to Mbale, Uganda. Brad, Simparinka, Tertullien, and Gerard spent each day making plans for 2016 and learning about strategic planning for whole-life discipleship from the staff of Mission: Moving Mountains (M:MM). After almost eight years of being mentored by M:MM, our mentors gave us a special certificate and released us to continue our D for D ministry. Then they told us that we are now colleagues and partners in D for D. It was a very special moment for all of us!

## All About Gideon

Gideon Mahoro Carpenter was born at sunrise on September 8, the day after Brad's birthday. We were thankful that we got to eat birthday brownies and ice cream before he arrived! But, more importantly, we were overwhelmed with thankfulness for the ways the Lord provided for us during his birth. We felt very well-taken-care-of by my midwife, the clinic, and Brad's parents (who were visiting). The Lord has also been providing for all our physical and emotional needs ever since!



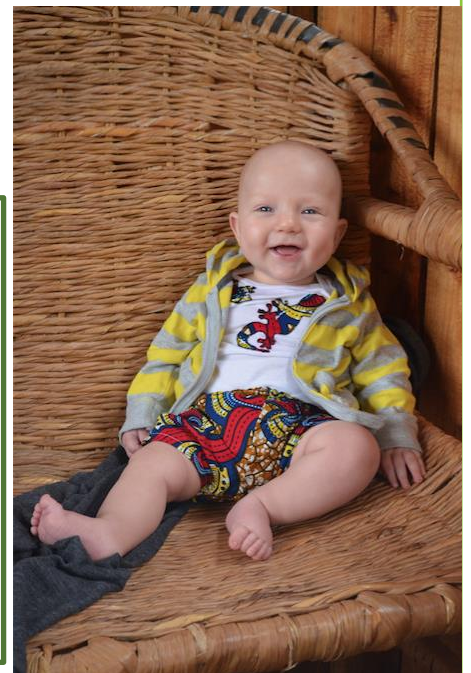
Praying over Gideon at the naming ceremony

Gideon was called "baby" for the first six days of his life. In traditional Rwandan culture, babies are unnamed for a week or so, but then the neighbors are invited to come and offer suggestions for names during a naming ceremony. So it was a great honor for us to have neighbors and friends join us, share snacks together (someone else cooked), offer name suggestions, and pray God's blessing and protection over our baby boy.

We decided on "Gideon" (mighty warrior) because it reminds us that though we are weak and unable, it's God's strength inside us that enables us to do anything he calls us to do. We chose

"Mahoro" because in Kinyarwanda it means *peace*. This is the kind of peace that means "all is well in every relationship: everything is how God wants it to be." We pray our boy will grow up to be a mighty warrior who fights for God's shalom peace!

Gideon is five months old and interested in everything, especially his three-year-old sister, Sarai. He has a few teeth, is sitting up, and is full of smiles. When he gets fussy, a trip outside will calm him down. We're so thankful for our sweet boy! Sarai is enjoying her baby brother too, and she loves to make him laugh! She also enjoys painting with watercolors, playing with her dolls, and playing outside. She is verbally articulate and we love to hear what she's thinking! Moving to Kigali has been a change for us, but we thank God for workers and friends who are here.



**Preparing for Furlough.** We will be in the US on furlough for about seven months: June 2016 to January 2017. In preparation for furlough, we will be packing and sorting our belongings and setting up logistical systems here in Rwanda to keep them running smoothly while we're away. We will also be mentoring and working with national D for D leaders, which will prepare them to continue the work while Brad is gone. In addition to that, we will be doing all sorts of planning and preparing for our time in the US. We look forward to being with family and friends, sharing what God has been doing in Rwanda, seeing many of YOU (our prayer supporters and partners), and taking time for sabbatical.